

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health


FOR THE

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

OF

WALTON-LE-DALE,

For the Year 1904.



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MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

The year 1904 having passed, it is my duty to present you with an Annual Report. Such report, you will find, sets forth a statement of the vital and mortal statistics of your Township, as well as the diseases that prevailed, their locality and time of prevalence, the sanitary improvements arrived at, and other details which, as a sanitary body, must interest you much.

In formulating these statistics I have accepted the population as estimated in the Census Returns for the year 1900, namely, 11,271. It is more satisfactory, in my opinion, to deal with such figures than possibly set forth a number of fallacious calculations, though based in all good faith, on those that are arrived at by mere supposition.

During the year 289 births and 207 deaths were recorded, giving a birth-rate in each 1,000 of the population of 25·64, and a death-rate of 18·36, or a natural increase of 82, or 59 less than the previous year, which year showed a decrease of 7 as compared with the year 1902.

Of the births, 148 are males and 141 females. Of the deaths, 81 were males and 126 females.

Under 1 year old 52 deaths took place, 1 year and under 5, 33; 5 and under 15, 7; 15 and under 25, 8; 25 and under 65, 54; 65 and upwards, 53. The deaths over 65 show a much higher rate than during the year 1903, in which year they were 34, or an increase of 19 during the past year who had attained to a riper old age.

It will interest those who have not an opportunity of inspecting these records to see these ages:—6 had arrived at 65 years, 5 at 66, 1 at 67, 1 at 68, 4 at 69, 4 at 70, 3 at 71, 5 at 72, 5 at 73, 3 at 74, 2 at 75, 3 at 76, 1 at 77, 1 at 78, 2 at 79, 2 at 80, 2 at 81, and 2 at 83. The maximum age was not as high as during 1903, when 1 death at 87 was recorded.

The birth-rate of your Township goes on to diminish from year to year. This diminution stands out in bold relief when contrasted with previous years. Take from 1892 to 1896. In the former year the rate was 34·32; in 1893, 35·14; in 1894, 30·50; in 1895, 30·46; and in 1896, 30·01, or taking the maximum of those years, 1893, with a rate of 35·14, showing a falling away of the rate during the past year of 9·50. This declining birth-rate does not appear to be confined to your Township in particular, for I see by the report of the Medical Officer of the Administrative County of London for the year 1903, that he has published “the lowest recorded rate in London since the institution of Civil Registration,” namely, 28·4 per 1,000 of the population.

The death-rate for the year, although not so satisfactory as that for 1903, when looked on from different points of view, cannot be considered excessive. The prevention of disease has one great sequence, namely, a lower death-rate. Whether we approach this subject from a social or national standpoint, the causes giving rise to deterioration and disease are those which we are obliged to contend with from day to day, and can only be overcome by individual and combined effort. The

combined effort has been, and is being, well carried out by the Board, but the individual effort is sadly wanting, and, in very many instances, is never put forward. All around us may be found ill-ventilated houses reeking with impure air, no effort made to prepare wholesome food, not sufficient bedclothes to keep the body warm during the long and cold winter nights, and I fear I must add intemperance, and, although this intemperance may not amount to drunkenness, it is such a waste and tax on a working man's wage as leads up to a want of those comforts which are indispensable in bringing up a young family. If by some means such evils could be overcome, then, in conjunction with the improvements that have been already accomplished, we might look in all hope to a diminishing death-rate.

When I examined the causes of this increase for the year, I find that where there were only 18 deaths from zymotic diseases during 1903; in the year under review there were 36, or just double the number. Again, while there were 44 deaths from diseases of the respiratory organs in 1903, there were 52 from the same lesions during the past year. I mentioned at the beginning of the report that the death-rate was 18·36. Such rate shows an excess over the year 1903 of only 2·11, but, on the other hand, if I take the rate of one year in the past 10 with the highest mortality, namely, 1895, the year 1904 shows an improvement of 2·40.

A detailed distribution of the zymotic diseases shows they did not confine themselves to any one particular portion of the Township. This fact is more especially to be observed with regard to measles—almost every corner of the Township had a visitation from this fatal disease, which is generally regarded by many parents as most harmless. For one moment let me draw your attention to the mortality from it. From a total of 36 deaths from all the zymotic diseases that occurred, 14 are placed against measles, or almost a half of all. Suppose

such a mortality occurred from typhoid fever, what would we think of our sanitary condition? The greatest mortality from typhoid fever since the year 1878 occurred in the year 1886, when only 8 deaths were attributed to it, or an average for the past 19 years of 2·2 per year. Yet this innocent disease measles, during the same years gives a mortality of 3·4, and is allowed to spread without one substantial effort being made to stay its progress, and so augments our mortality, sinking the Township to the level of an unhealthy borough. Notification and isolation of the first cases would, in all probability, stop any approach to an epidemic. Both of these measures you are now in a position to adopt.

Without going further into this part of a subject allowing of endless discussion, I pass on to enumerate and localise these 36 deaths, and I take them in the order in which they are placed on Table IV. From measles 14, scarlet fever 2, Whooping cough 7, croup 1, typhoid fever 2, diarrhoea 5, enteritis 5. Two of the deaths from measles occurred in School Lane, 6 in Bamber Bridge, 3 in Higher Walton, 1 in Walton-le-Dale, 1 in Many Brooks, 1 in Hoghton Lane. The only 2 from scarlatina in Lostock. From whooping cough, 5 in Bamber Bridge, 1 in Higher Walton, and 1 in Hoghton Lane. From croup, 1 in Higher Walton. From typhoid fever, 1 in Higher Walton, and 1 in Tardy Gate. From diarrhoea, 1 in School Lane, 2 in Bamber Bridge, 1 in Higher Walton, and 1 in Walton-le-Dale. From enteritis, 1 in Bamber Bridge, 1 in Tardy Gate, 1 in Walton-le-Dale, and 2 in Hoghton Lane.

The zymotic death-rate for the year in each 1,000 of the population stands at 3·20. This is very high, and, as in the year 1900, is due to the number of deaths from measles and whooping cough.

The other reason I assigned for the increase in the death-rate for the year is the increase in the number of deaths from diseases of the respiratory organs. These deaths include those caused by bronchitis, pneumonia, pleurisy, and phthisis. I do not include those coming under the head of "other diseases of the respiratory organs." For the past five years the deaths from these affections show a most irregular chart line. In 1900 they numbered 61; in 1901, 31; in 1902, 23; in 1903, 43; in 1904, 52. The meteorological conditions of the past year were exceptionally favourable to a low rate, yet the number of deaths are only 9 under 1900, which was not so fine a year. The deaths from phthisis are 7 more than in the year 1902, which had the smallest rate (9) during the five years.

From the steady decline for four years in the deaths from phthisis, I was beginning to hope that possibly the improved sanitary condition of the Township and the better class of houses that have been built, admitting of free ventilation, would possibly bring about an improvement, but the death-rate for the past year has quite shattered those hopes. Believing it to be an infectious disease of no mean order, with your consent I had the rooms occupied by such patients after death thoroughly disinfected.

The record of cases coming under "The Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1889," shows an improvement when placed side by side with 1903. In that year there were 68 cases, in the past year 45, showing a decrease as compared with 1903 of 23, and giving a rate of infectious illness in each 1,000 of the population of 3·99, or 2·04 less than in 1903, or as compared with 1902 an improvement of 8·16.

Not the least interesting portion of a report is to have laid before one the portions of a Township in which such diseases have occurred, and when possible the number of cases in each

locality. To enable me to do this I have gone carefully through all the monthly reports, with the following result:—In Bamber Bridge, 1 case of scarlatina, 4 of typhoid fever, 1 of erysipelas, and 1 of diphtheria; in Walton-le-Dale, 1 case of typhoid fever, 1 of erysipelas, and 3 of puerperal septicæmia; in Higher Walton, 6 of typhoid fever, and 1 of puerperal septicæmia; in Hennel Lane, 1 of typhoid fever; in Lostock and Tardy Gate, 1 of small pox, and 25 of scarlatina; and in Gregson Lane 1 of scarlatina. School Lane is the only populous portion of the township that came out with a clean slate. This I could hardly credit were the facts not before me. Heretofore it has held rather an unenviable position. The two portions of the township—Bamber Bridge and School Lane—which suffered most from infectious disease in 1903, have come out in the past year with the best record. It is absolutely impossible for me to put forward any thoroughly reliable theory to account for so marked a change. At the same time the most likely is that suggested by Ransome and Whitelegge, that the more common and fatal infectious diseases “observe definite periodic times or cycles which may be described as a succession of waves, the periods covered by the waves differing for different diseases.” Should such be the case I only hope for the benefit of both places that the waves have rolled by for a long period.

Both these places in years gone by have been smartly visited by infectious outbreaks, so that, after all, the most likely reason for their escape during the past year may be due to the fact that the present young folks have become immune, and that in the course of time another generation will spring up and provide a fresh field for microbic industry, and that both places will become the haunts again of infectious disease. In a former report I referred to the sub-soil formation of these places, which doubtless lends no little help to the endemic character of the diseases from which they suffered.

In order to make this report complete I now give you a summary of the monthly reports that have been presented to you during the year.

The first month of the year was ushered in with rather a heavy death-rate—22·35, caused by measles and respiratory diseases; the latter as secondary to the measles made this zymotic very severe. Only two infectious cases were notified, one of scarlatina, and one of typhoid fever. On learning of the typhoid case I at once visited the house in which it occurred, and examined its surroundings. I attributed the cause of the outbreak to defective drainage. In referring to my Report Book I found that in June, 1899, there was a similar outbreak in this house. At that time I looked on it in all probability as being caused by the use of impure water. This cannot have anything to do with the last case, from the fact that on the appearance of the case in 1899 the township's water was put into the house. The farmer was in the habit of sending milk to town, which was at once discontinued on the appearance of the fever.

The month of February had a heavy death-rate—24·48. This rate was also caused by measles and respiratory affections. The infectious notification cases numbered 14. Twelve of these were scarlatina; all occurred at Lostock and Tardy Gate. Owing to this outbreak two schools were closed. Measles and whooping cough were very prevalent during the month. In the month of March the deaths outnumbered the births by 2·13. Eleven cases of scarlatina were notified; all occurred at Lostock and Tardy Gate. At your request I inspected a house in Green Lane, which I found to be dilapidated, damp, the walls in a dangerous condition, the drains of a rudimentary character, and the surroundings bad. I pronounced it unfit for habitation.

In the month of April the birth and death rates assumed a much more normal aspect, the former 27·68, the latter 15·97. Only 6 infectious cases were notified. During the months of May, June, and July the death-rate came down to 9·58 in the latter month; 2 infectious cases summed up the total for the three months. The epidemic of measles appeared to go on unabated.

The months of August and September were most satisfactory from a health point of view. One infectious case was notified. October and November were uneventful, with the exception that 6 typhoid fever cases were notified. Three of these occurred in one house; all made good recoveries. The sudden cold and severe weather that came on in November produced a heavy proportion of lung affections. The month of December had the highest death-rate that occurred in any month since February, 1900—30·87. Almost half the deaths were caused by respiratory diseases, and occurred in infancy and advanced ages. Two infectious cases were notified—1 typhoid fever and 1 of small-pox. The small-pox case occurred at Tardy Gate. Within two hours he was removed to Bradkirk Hospital, and all those in the house over seven years old re-vaccinated. The patient had been vaccinated but not re-vaccinated. The attack was of a mild character.

The sanitary condition of the mills and workshops in the Township is satisfactory. I have not had any complaints lodged with me respecting them. The bake and slaughter houses have been well kept, and cannot in any way be looked upon as a nuisance. The slaughter-houses are private establishments, and I must say strict cleanliness has been the rule observed by the owners. There is no such building in the Township as a bakehouse under ground.

In the memorandum as to Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health it is impressed on us with reference

to dangerous nuisances and sanitary defects in the following words:—"It is of especial importance that the Medical Officers of Health should record what action has been taken to remedy unhealthy conditions which have been reported by him in previous Annual Reports, or in Special Reports presented during the year under review, and that attention should be called afresh, year by year, to such as remain unremedied." Acting on these instructions, it is only necessary for me to again remind you that two most dangerous evils, to which I have on more than one occasion drawn your attention, still remain unaltered. These evils I placed before you in a former report in the following words:—"I would much like, before closing this report, to again draw your attention to the very great danger to the cottage population through the defective manner in which a large proportion of the back yards is paved. As a rule these yards are not large, and could be made perfectly sanitary at a moderate expense; but whether the matter of expense should enter into such a movement is, perhaps, not for me to say. Suffice it that so glaring and dangerous a nuisance must one day demand your attention. The second, and by no means a danger of minor importance, is the dust nuisance of the spring and summer. In former reports I pointed out rather fully the danger arising from clouds of dust blowing about, and more especially in a Township like yours, where liquid manure carts so frequently pass along the roads splashing the liquid excreta about, and leaving offensive odours in their wake. In time this manure becomes dust, then it is obvious to all wherein the danger lies. Water carts should be provided and, at least, the dust in populous portions of the Township kept under control."

Could these improvements be accomplished I am convinced the health of your Township would show a corresponding change for the better. We are too much disposed to pass over what may appear to the casual observer a slight danger;

but I ask you—what greater danger can there be than having your mouth, nose, and eyes filled with dust, in all probability laden with many varieties of micro-organisms? And this is exactly what occurs to people traversing the roads in your Township.

I am perfectly conversant with every corner of the Township, and make constant inspections of those parts where unwholesome conditions would be most likely to arise. The Nuisance Inspector (Mr. Moxham) is a man of undaunted energy, who would at once apprise me of any matter requiring attention. I herewith give you his report:—

Forty-three thousand five hundred and twenty-five pails were emptied and cleaned; 12,132 ashpits and petties cleaned; 31 houses have been fumigated and disinfected; 34 beds and bedding disinfected in the hot-air chamber; 33 owners of property have been served with notices to correct nuisances; 16 houses have had pails placed in closets where there were wet bog-holes before; these bogs have been filled up and tubs have been supplied for ashes, &c.; 16 houses have had water-closets substituted for bog-holes holding water, and tins and tubs for ashes, &c.

Three houses have been examined by means of the smoke test—two had the drains right, the third house all wrong. One house has been condemned as unfit for habitation.

Forty-one houses have had the Township's water put in. Two farms, 1 mill, 2 large works, employing 170 hands, have also had the Township's water put in. To carry out this latter work the Council has supplied 3,083 yards of 3 inch iron piping.

I attach all the necessary forms to the report.

Your obedient Servant,

ROBT. TRIMBLE, M.D.

TABLE I.**WALTON-LE-DALE URBAN DISTRICT.***Vital Statistics of whole District during 1904 and previous years.*

YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District.
		Number.	Rate.*	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.		
				Number.	Rate per 1,000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate*	
1894	10556	322	30·50	53	156·98	168	15·91	..
1895	10930	333	30·46	70	210·21	227	20·76	..
1896	10930	339	30·01	44	129·79	157	14·36	..
1897	10930	338	30·92	71	210·05	213	19·49	..
1898	11733	351	29·21	53	150·99	189	15·25	..
1899	11733	315	26·84	50	158·73	202	17·21	..
1900	11733	333	28·38		204·20	235	20·02	..
1901	11733	274	24·31	29	103·83	129	11·00	..
1902	11139	310	27·50	31	100·00	162	14·43	..
1903	11271	300	26·61	32	106·66	159	14·10	..
Averages for years 1894-1903	11268	321	28·47	50	153·14	184	16·25	..
1904	11271	289	25·64	52	179·90	207	18·36	†1

* Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

† This one is included in Column 7.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 4682a. 3r. 1p.

Total population at all ages at Census of 1901, 11,271; number of inhabited houses, 2,550; average number of persons per house, 4½.

TABLE II.**WALTON-LE-DALE URBAN DISTRICT.**

*Vital Statistics of separate Localities in 1904 and
previous years.*

NAME OF LOCALITY.	WALTON-LE-DALE.			
YEAR.	Population esti- mated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.
1894.....	10556	322	168	54
1895.....	10930	333	277	70
1896.....	10920	339	157	44
1897.....	10930	338	213	71
1898.....	11733	351	189	53
1899.....	11733	315	202	50
1900.....	11733	333	235	68
1901.....	11721	274	129	29
1902.....	11721	310	162	31
1903.....	11721	300	159	32
Average of years 1894 to 1903 }	11235	321	184	50
1904.....	11271	289	207	52

TABLE III.
WALTON-LE-DALE URBAN DISTRICT.
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1904.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	At all ages.	NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	At all ages.
Small-pox	1	<i>Carried forward.....</i>	30
Cholera .....	..	Enteric Fever.....	12
Diphtheria.....	1	Relapsing Fever .....	..
Membranous Croup .....	..	Continued Fever .....	..
Erysipelas	2	Puerperal Fever.....	3
Scarlet Fever	26	Plague .....	..
Typhus Fever .....	..	
<i>Brought forward.....</i>	30	TOTALS	45

Ages not given on Certificate.

Isolation Hospital only opened late in the year.

TABLE IV.

WALTON-LE-DALE URBAN COUNCIL.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1904.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths at the subjoined Ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.						
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up-wards.
Small-pox .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	14	2	11	1	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever	2	..	2	..	..	..	..
Whooping Cough	7	4	3	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Fever { Typhus .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{ Enteric	2	..	..	..	..	1	1
{ Other Continued .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Epidemic Influenza .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diarrhœa	5	5	..	..	..	..	..
Enteritis	5	4	1	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Septic Diseases .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ..	16	1	1	1	4	8	2
Other Tubercular Diseases	8	5	2	1	..	..	..
Cancer, Malignant Disease	8	..	..	..	..	5	3
Bronchitis	20	3	1	..	..	8	8
Pneumonia	12	5	4	..	..	2	1
Pleurisy .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs ..	4	3	..	..	..	..	1
Alcoholism } .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cirrhosis of Liver } .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Venereal Diseases .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Premature Birth	5	5	..	..	..	..	..
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition ..	3	..	..	..	..	3	..
Heart Diseases	12	..	..	..	..	8	4
Accidents	7	1	1	3	1	..	1
Suicides .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
All other Causes	76	15	6	1	3	19	32
All Causes	207	52	33	7	8	54	53

**FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, LAUNDRIES, WORKPLACES,
AND HOMEWORK.**

The Factories and Workshops have been brought up to the Sanitary Standard required by the Act. No defects have come under observation.

SUMMARY OF MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 1904.

URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF WALTON-LE-DALE.—Area in statute acres, 4682 3r. 1p.; Population (Census) 1901, 11,271; Population (Estimated) 1904, 11,271; Name of Medical Officer of Health, ROBERT TRIMBLE; Salary, £50.

Births Registered—Male 148, Female 141, Total 289.

Deaths Registered (nett deaths belonging to the District)—Male 81, Female 126, Total 207.

Number of Illegitimate Births Registered—None.

Illegitimate Deaths under one year of age—None.

Birth Rate 25·64. Death Rate 18·36. Rate of Infant Deaths, under one year, to 1,000 Births 179·90.

Death Rate from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases per 1,000 of Population 3·20.

Diseases prevalent?—Measles and Whooping Cough almost all the year, Scarlatina during the summer.

What action taken—any Schools Closed?—Two.

For what Disease Schools Closed?—Scarlatina.

What is the character of the Hospital Accommodation?—Infectious and Small Pox.

Is it Joint or otherwise?—Belongs to the Council.

Number of Beds available for the District?—8 Small-pox, 12 Infectious.

Number of Cases treated?—1 Small-pox. (The Infectious Hospital is only a short time open).

Deaths in Hospital?—None.

How is Disinfection carried out?—Houses, Fumigation; Clothing, Bedding, &c., Hot Air.

Apparatus used?—Hot Air.

Number of cases of Infectious Disease Notified?—45.

Are any Diseases not specifically mentioned in the Act notifiable (for instance, Measles, Whooping Cough, Diarrhœa, Chicken Pox, &c.) ?
If so, what are they?—No.

Has any arrangement been made for the “voluntary” notification of Phthisis?—No, nor do I think voluntary notification would succeed.

Has any action been taken under “The Housing of the Working Classes Acts”?—No.

How many houses condemned as unfit for human habitation, and how many closed or demolished?—One.

From where is the Water Supply obtained, and what is its condition?
Is it subject to your Inspection?—Part from Authority’s Pumping Station at Brindle, and part Thirlmere. Yes.

Is Scavenging carried out satisfactorily?—Yes.

How is the Refuse disposed of?—For manure in the gardens.

What is the character of Drainage, and the form of Sewage Disposal?—District Council Sewage Works.

Canal Boats (Number Inspected, &c.)?—None.

What is the condition of the Bakehouses?—Always in good order.

Slaughter Houses?—In good order.

Lodging Houses—Are they Registered?—None in the Township.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops—Are they periodically Inspected?—Yes.

What is their condition?—Generally clean.

What amount of air space in cubic feet is required for each cow?—About 1000 cubic feet for each cow; in many unlimited air.

Food unfit for Human Consumption, amount seized?—None by me.

Any Special Report of Medical Officer of Health during the year?—No.

Department of Inspector of Nuisances--No. of Notices served?—33.

No. of Nuisances remedied?—All remedied.

Smoke—No. of Observations?—Nil.

Has the Authority adopted—

(a) “The Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890”?—Yes.

(b) “The Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890”?—Yes.

